

25th July 1964]

(4) THE MADRAS COMPULSORY LABOUR (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1964.

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : Sir, I beg leave to introduce the Madras Compulsory Labour (Amendment) Bill, 1964 and move—

‘That the Bill be taken into consideration’.

The Madras Compulsory Labour Act, 1858 (Central Act I of 1858) makes lawful compulsory labour for the prevention of mischief by inundation, and provides for the enforcement of customary labour on certain works of irrigation in this State. Section 1 of that Act makes it lawful for an officer-in-charge of any tank, river or canal or any anicut or other like work when there is imminent danger of the embankment of such tank, river or canal being breached, or of a breach being made in such anicut or other work, to require the head or heads of the village or villages to call all able-bodied male persons in such village or villages to co-operate in the work necessary for preventing or repairing the breach.

This provision, however, is not strictly in conformity with Article 11 of the International Labour Organisation Convention No. 29 concerning forced labour which lays down that only adult able-bodied males who are of an apparent age of not less than 18 years and not more than 45 years may be called upon for forced or compulsory labour. The Government consider that it is necessary to bring the provisions of the said Act in line with the International Labour Organisation Convention by suitably modifying sections 1 and 2 of the Act. Accordingly, it is proposed to amend sections 1 and 2 of the Act so that only adult able-bodied males who are of an apparent age of not less than 18 years and not more than 45 years can be called upon for work connected with the prevention of mischief by inundation or the repairing of the breach in any embankment of any irrigation work.

Sir, I request the House to accept the motion.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is—

‘That the Madras Compulsory Labour (Amendment) Bill, 1964 be taken into consideration.’

The motion was put and carried and the Bill was taken into consideration.

Clauses 2 and 3 were put and carried.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were put and carried.

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : Sir, I move—

‘That the Madras Compulsory Labour (Amendment) Bill, 1964 be passed.’

The motion was put and carried and the Bill was passed.